

# \$3,000,000 WORTH OF ROAD BUILDING MATERIAL IN VIRGINIA

## CARLOAD A DAY SENT HERE BY GOVERNMENT

Largest Automotive Plant in State Operated by Highway Department at the Penitentiary—Stock There Is Estimated to Be Worth \$1,250,000.

Even in these days of big business, an organization which has under its direction \$3,000,000 worth of motor vehicle and road-building equipment will hardly be considered a small concern. The possession of this amount of equipment in the name of the State is only a small part of the job ahead of the equipment division of the Virginia State Highway Department. The tremendous task which the equipment division not only has undertaken, but is doing well, is to take this varied stock of a thousand different items which is sent to Richmond at the rate of a carload a day by the Federal government and make it serviceable.

The equipment division is doing more than this. It is getting the material used in the construction and maintenance of State and county highways in such a way that it will produce actual cash revenues sufficient to take care of the equipment of the division and to provide a surplus to replace the equipment given to the State by the government after it is worn out. In other words, as expressed by Commissioner George P. Coleman, it is the intention of the department to conserve the value of the assets of \$3,000,000 of equipment so that in five or ten years or longer from now the State will have the equipment to do the work ahead of it.

**Cost Less Than Rental.** The trucks, tractors, power plants, etc., must earn their replacement value. Their rental is charged to each particular job. Tools and materials are charged up at the end of the job, and the equipment is inventoried. The same plan is followed when the State is dealing with the counties. The cost in every case is much less than the equipment could be rented for. The materials furnished by private concerns in competition with the equipment division. How Virginia withstood the temptation to surrender this immense fortune in equipment dropped down in her lap by a beneficent Federal government is a story worthy of the entire space devoted to this article. The equipment, which is sent to the plant, storage warehouses and yards of the equipment division at the State Penitentiary, is produced by the enormous amount of material and equipment on hand, however, drives out for the moment all thought of how the Virginia State Highway Department has arrived at the present plan of conserving their resources.

At the State Penitentiary the inventory of stock and equipment is approximately \$1,250,000. This inventory is based on the actual value to the State, and not the purchase price of the equipment. Admittedly \$1,250,000 would buy quite a number of trucks, tractors, power plants, tools, etc. Well, the equipment division has 26,000 square feet of floor space in the buildings and four acres of yards packed and jammed with equipment. Even the ceilings are used to support bins in which some of the materials are stored. A catalogue of the material there would be larger than the list of any supply house in the State. The quantities run as high as 50,000 in some items and 4,000 tons in the case of bridge iron. The remainder of the \$3,000,000 worth of equipment is out on various jobs over the State and in use by the counties.

What is the State doing with this

and all other equipment used in the work has been furnished by the government. The State is also building portable bunk houses on the running gear of wagons furnished by the government. Nash Quad and Liberty motors, salvaged from used trucks, furnish the power for portable air compressors, built right at the plant. One portable air compressor just recently completed is sufficiently heavy to operate one tripod and two jack hammers. Other portable power plants have been built out of these motors to operate rock crushers. Portable power water pumps have been built out of equipment, both new and salvaged, received from the government.

**Get Tractors Into Condition.** In accordance with instructions from Commissioner Coleman the equipment division has a "weather eye" on the kind of equipment most suited for the greatly enlarged maintenance program which will be instituted when the State takes over the entire mileage of the State highway system. For this purpose the State is getting into condition all of the forty ten-ton caterpillar tractors, finding out how many of the 230 serviceable motor trucks can be spared for this purpose, just how many years the supply of harness for the hundreds of miles which will be used in this work will last and how economically the State can get rock from the State's quarries for this purpose. In this connection, the equipment division took over the operation of a large rock-crushing plant at Culpeper. Fortunately, the State was able to supply all of the equipment needed to operate the crusher out of its own vast storehouse, excepting the crusher itself. This included power plant, drills, pumps, explosives, railroad track, motor trucks, etc. Speaking of railroad tracks, in the yard at the penitentiary the State has piled up thirty miles of thirty-pound track with spikes, frogs, switches, and everything ready but the cross ties for use. While on the subject of railroads, the State possesses two twenty-four-inch gauge gasoline locomotives, in addition to 150 or more of cars.

To climb over the piles of material stored in the yards gives an even larger conception of what a big job the equipment division has assumed. Hundreds of tons of reinforcing metal, 700 tons of plates and angle bars, between 2,000 and 4,000 tons of bridge steel, represents only a small part of the stock stored in the open. Here are masts for five and ten-ton cranes with fifty and sixty-foot beams, which will be used by the State in stone quarries, opened up to provide the stone for the maintenance work. In for Nash Quad trucks, in addition to the use of the parts in rebuilding the trucks and cars, the district engineers and counties by referring to the catalog order repair parts for trucks and cars which they are using. These are charged up at inventory price to whoever gets them, and the account is collected as if the equipment division was a separate corporation.

**Largest Plant in State.** The rebuilding of equipment is only a part of the work which goes on at the largest automotive plant in the State of Virginia, owned and operated by the State at the penitentiary. Much of the equipment and materials may not be directly of service in road-building. Some of the trucks and cars received are in such condition that they cannot be rebuilt. In this case, they are dismantled and the serviceable parts salvaged and added to the stock of spare parts. A Nash-Quad motor is furnishing all the power to run the lathes, drills, saws and other machinery, as well as a 15-K. W. generator, which, in turn, furnishes the lights for the plant. A duplicate Nash motor is hooked up ready to carry on in the event the other power plant is temporarily out of commission. By the way, the lathes, saws, generator,

event this location is not secured, the State will be compelled to secure ground and trackage elsewhere. The saving in cost of rehandling of the materials in and out of the equipment division plant would more than pay the interest on the investment in ground and buildings. The location at the State Penitentiary is also unsuited for the work. It was the best the State Highway Department could do at the time the equipment division was established. Mr. Coleman states that he has received the finest kind of co-operation from the State Penitentiary board and officials. Certain rules must be followed, however, by all those who are working within the walls of the penitentiary. For example, work must stop at 4:10 in the afternoon. The office men or mechanics cannot work after this hour on Sundays, regardless of how urgent the case may be. Equipment can be taken out only during certain hours. The worst handicap is the lack of a side-track and switching facilities. The big equipment weighing many tons must be handled from an outside siding or freight depot by motor truck involving a greatly increased overhead. The State hasn't sufficient warehouses to place all of the equipment which should be under cover. The officials are doing the best they can. They are using the portable canvas airplane hangers to cover as much as possible.

**Others Study Operation.** When a department of the State government does its work so well that representatives of seven States visit Richmond to make a study of its operation, the reason can only be that the personnel in charge of the organization is functioning unusually well. A representative of the Montana Highway Department visited the plant last week.

Commissioner Coleman determined at the outset that the plan of this government equipment must be carried over. Edwin M. Evans, who was formerly with the equipment division of the United States Office of Public Roads, was placed in charge as equipment engineer. O. M. Green, a bookkeeper of the State Highway Department, devised the system of accounting. In this connection, the system of record keeping is so complete that not only is a perpetual inventory of the vast stock always available, but the record of the cost and earnings of every piece of equipment in use is brought up to date. This follows through the branch repair shops at Bristol, Staunton, Lynchburg and Culpeper.

Mr. Evans as equipment engineer, has gathered around him an organization the equal, if not superior, to that of any other State. Robert A. Gary is the general superintendent of all of the repair shops and supply depots. A. B. Sneed is the purchasing agent. Wherever supplies or new equipment are needed, they are purchased by competitive bids. For example, \$27,000 worth of new road-building equipment was purchased last month out of the earnings of government equipment. The purchasing department is proud of the saving which they have made by studying closely how equipment and materials can be bought at the lowest possible price.

**Shepard General Foreman.** H. P. Shepard is the general foreman of the Richmond shop. He has under him sixty-odd mechanics and laborers. Every class of automotive work is done in his shop. Batteries, magnetos, starters, generators and other electric equipment are rebuilt. All of the tops and upholstered work is done in the shop. Mr. Shepard stated that the cost of rebuilding a Dodge car used during the war in army service and making out of it a car which was almost as good as new, ranged from \$250 to \$300. This included charge for all parts when new at regular manufacturer's prices and when salvaged from an old car at half the list price and all labor

and material. These cars are used by the engineers out on the job.

An important part of the work is the record keeping. This is in charge of Alan S. Wright, as chief clerk. His department is so thoroughly organized that no item of cost is overlooked. The system has become almost automatic in handling the paper work. Any information wanted can be had at a minute's notice from how many Dodge piston rings are in stock to just what truck No. 285 out on the job at Squeeduck has cost and what it has earned up to date.

The service of the Equipment Division is still in its infancy. It is now buying and looking after all of the equipment and materials purchased by the State Highway Department. It has taken over the operation of the large stone quarry at Culpeper. Other plants will be opened up and

operated by the Equipment Division. Mr. Coleman has found out that the Equipment Division can purchase supplies for use by the maintenance department economically and that the Equipment Division has the system installed to see that a proper accounting is had. In this way, one department is a check against the other. It may be that the State Highway Department will find it advantageous to purchase other materials used in road construction in quantities, which if done will make the Equipment Division the largest business enterprise of the State.

**Take Pride in Work.** One of the outstanding features of the Equipment Division is the pride and enthusiasm which every man in the organization is taking in his work. They need and should have the encouragement of the State in

securing the ground and spur tracks for the efficient and economic handling of \$3,000,000 worth of equipment without further delay. The Equipment Division has the cranes, locomotives, tracks and other equipment necessary for a new plant. Mr. Evans believes he can secure from the government the steel and iron for the warehouses. The Equipment Division can do its own concrete work. It is to be hoped that the Air Supply Depot can be secured, as that plant is practically equipped now for the work of the State.

**Miss Cardwell to Marry.** Invitations have been issued by Mr. and Mrs. N. D. Cardwell to the marriage of their daughter, Dorothy Price, to Benjamin Walter Davis, on Wednesday, June 7, at 6:30 P. M., in St. Thomas' Church, Glinter Park.

## NINE-YEAR-OLD BOY ACCUSED OF MURDER

Charged With Killing Another Lad In Quarrel Over a Baseball Glove.

[By Associated Press.] PORTLAND, IND., June 3.—Robert Silvers, 9 years old, is held on a charge of first-degree murder here today as the result of the fatal stabbing yesterday of 9-year-old Bernard Teeters. The lads are alleged to have quarreled over a baseball glove. Following the quarrel, the Silvers boy obtained a kitchen knife and stabbed his playmate, according to police.

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A wonderful collection of smart imported Gingham or Organdies, also dainty Dotted Swiss, in all the season's leading shades and most desirable and conceivable models are offered for Monday's selling at this low price. Included are Dresses with the tie-back sashes or Organdie belts, and all are stunningly trimmed.

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About 50 Hats of exquisite patterns, and formerly sold up to \$12.50; offered tomorrow at

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Special Purchase and Sale of

## WOMEN'S SWEATERS



Our buyer just closed this purchase of about 500 Sweaters and rushed them through by express. These are Sweaters of extra-fine Wool, in the newest fancy slip-stitch weave, in a great many different styles, and have round or open neck, and some are in the latest striped effects; they have long sleeves, close-fitting cuffs and heavy girdles with tassels. All placed on sale, while they last, at.....

**1.69**

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Many different styles; so carefully made of such dependable fabrics that such low prices make this offering most remarkable.

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**SILK HOSE**—Mock Seam Hose that are silk to the knee, reinforced sole and double tops, in white, gray and nude; all sizes. Special at..... **98c**

**FULL-FASHION HOSE**—A special lot of full-fashion plain and Silk Hose—also pure silk with embroidery and with hand-sewed crotch—are offered at this low price..... **1.49**



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